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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
OFFICE OF CURRENT INTELLIGENCE  
16 March 1954

PRE-GENEVA CONFERENCE DEVELOPMENTS - V

Three more UN members accept Geneva conference invitations: Greece, Belgium, and the Netherlands have now accepted invitations to the Geneva conference. This brings acceptances on the western side to thirteen and leaves only South Korea, Luxembourg, and Ethiopia as yet undecided. South Africa has rejected the invitation.

British attitude on unification of Korea: The British Foreign Office is thinking of unifying Korea in four stages: (1) free elections throughout Korea to a National Assembly, the elections to be supervised either by UNCURK or a non-UN body of neutral states; (2) the drafting of a new constitution by the National Assembly and the establishment of an all-Korean government; (3) agreement between the new Korean government and interested powers on troop withdrawal and security arrangements; and (4) the withdrawal of foreign forces.

While the prompt presentation of this plan would have obvious propaganda advantages, it would be unacceptable to the Communists and probably to President Rhee. Rhee has agreed to nationwide elections for the presidency, but he still maintains that the north should fill 100 vacant seats in the present South Korean assembly. He has also maintained consistently that ROK sovereignty must not be violated, and he will probably insist that the electorate be permitted an opportunity to adhere to the existing ROK government. He asserts that the US and the UN have endorsed this claim of exclusive ROK legitimacy, especially in the UNGA resolution of 12 December 1948, which stated that the ROK is the only lawful government in Korea.

French Foreign Ministry official favors negotiations with Ho: An indication that the French foreign ministry is considering the possibility of post-Geneva negotiations with Ho Chi Minh occurred on 11 March when the deputy political director told American officials that he agreed with Mendes-France's demand for such negotiations. Heretofore the Foreign Ministry has opposed these talks.

State Dept. review completed

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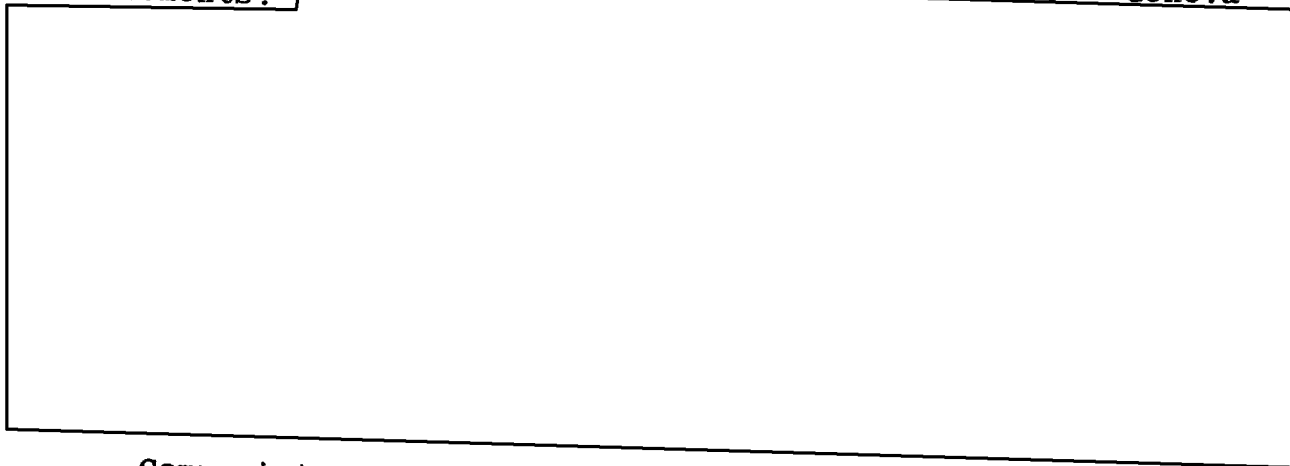
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Vietnamese newspapers publishing anti-Communist themes:  
Vietnamese newspapers in Saigon recently stopped using anti-Communist material provided by the United States Information Agency (USIA). This suggests that the Vietnamese, fearing a sell-out at Geneva, are adjusting to a possible Communist takeover of Indochina.

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Communists continue to emphasize Indochina in pre-Geneva statements:



Communist propaganda failed to provide any clear indications of probable positions on substantive issues concerning an Indochina settlement, but produced strong evidence that Moscow will demand Viet Minh representation at Geneva. One of Moscow's chief aims probably is to secure greater international recognition and prestige for Ho Chi Minh's government. A recent Soviet broadcast in Tonkinese recalled that the "Democratic Republic of Vietnam" has been recognized by the USSR, Communist China, North Korea and various People's Democracies in Europe and declared that the Western Powers, by agreeing to convene the Geneva conference, "indirectly recognized the growing significance and role of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam."

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